

ARCHITECTURE

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PROFESSIONAL COMMENT.

A RECENT decision, rendered by the Court of Appeals of New York State in reference to a bill for extra work submitted by a contractor, is of the utmost importance to the architectural profession, with particular reference to work involving alterations. In the first place, it shows the vital necessity of a most complete examination of the existing structure by the architect, and it likewise forms the best possible basis for the argument which the architect continually has to make to his client in order to justify the extra charge usually made for this class of work. It should also have an important bearing upon the work now being done by the New York Chapter of the Institute of Architects in their efforts to induce the city to allow this extra compensation in municipal contracts, as it has been the custom of the municipality for some years to pay 5 per cent. commission on work of all kinds, whether alterations or new buildings. In the case referred to, which was that of John Langley *vs.* Peter W. Rouss, Executor, the contract provided that no allowance should be made for extra work unless an itemized estimate was submitted in the usual way, and the architect's order in writing given therefor. In the decision the Court stated that this provision precluded the contractor recovering for extras done under the architect's verbal orders, and notwithstanding that the architect was acting as agent for the owner, it also prevented him from waiving the written requirement for an itemized estimate and the order in writing. The specific action was brought to recover some \$11,000 for shoring and other work which was done in the course of an alteration and which was found necessary on account of conditions found to exist during the course of the work which were not clearly shown upon the contract drawings and specifications, though evidently necessary to complete. In the judgment rendered the Court made the statement "that where the amount of work to be performed and materials to be furnished under and by the contract depended upon conditions that cannot be ascertained by inspection, and bidders are not required and given an opportunity to make such investigations as are necessary to satisfy themselves as to the amount of work to be done and materials to be furnished, and the contract plans and specifications include representations as to existing conditions and which are inserted for the purpose of enabling the contractors to determine what bid to make for the proposed work and materials, a recovery may be had as for a breach of contract for the damages caused, if it should turn out that the representations are erroneous."

MR. CHARLES F. McKIM has added to the debt which the profession already owes him by giving a permanent fund of twenty thousand dollars to Harvard University to establish the Julia Amory Appleton Fellowship in architecture, which he has supported for a number of years by an annual contribution of one thousand dollars.

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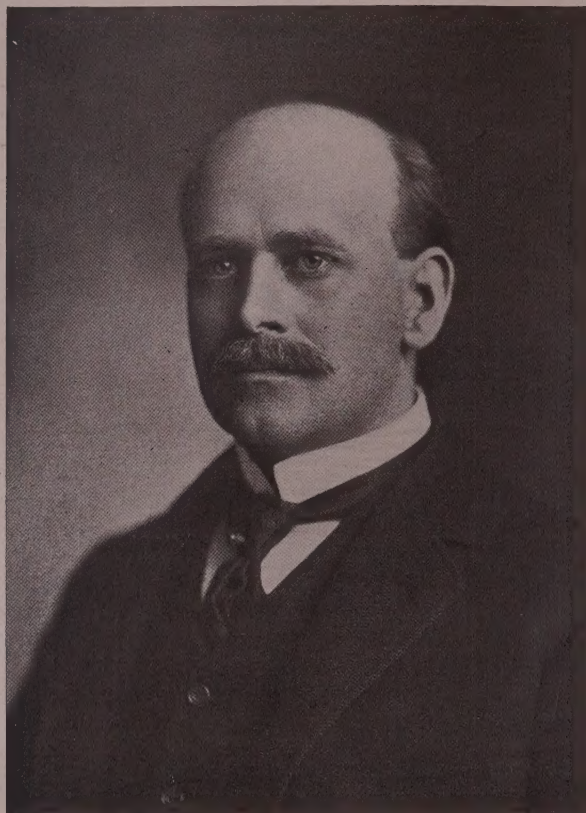
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Architects of To-Day.

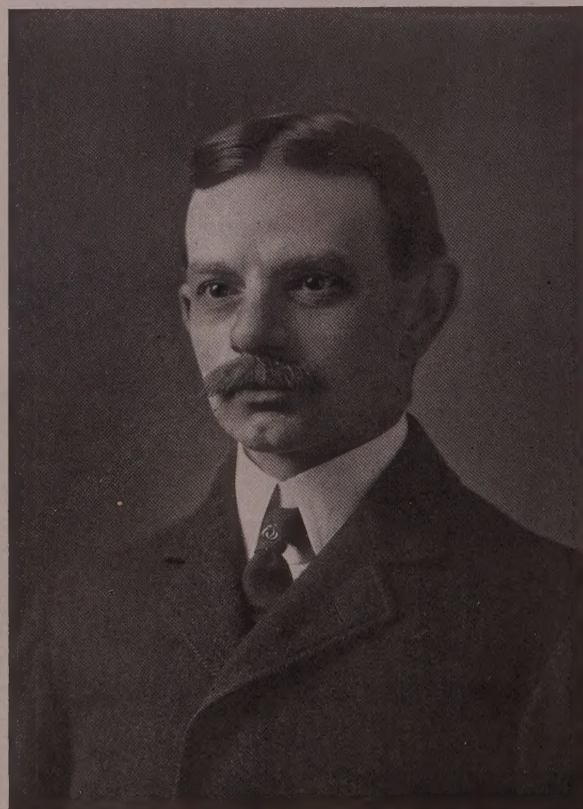
MR. WILLIAM J. MARSH, WASHINGTON.

IN an editorial in one of New York's dailies commenting upon competitions in general, and a recent one in particular, the system by which competitors enter competitions under their own names, was favorably commented upon and a statement made that architecture was one of the few professions where in most competitive work a man's reputation was of no value to him on account of the fact that drawings were usually submitted under a *nom de plume*. A correspondent, who signed himself "Young Architect," promptly took up the cudgels for the opposition and called attention to the fact that architecture was naturally divided into two branches—conception and execution. "Competitions are held," he stated, "to obtain the best possible conception or architectural solution of a particular problem. Execution of the work has nothing to do with competition, and I heartily agree that the public will never complain of a system that gives the execution of important works to men who have proved their ability to carry them out in the best way. If the young architect has the ability to conceive of the best solution of important works, he would be likely to have the same sense to see that his conception is carried out in the best possible way, and, in addition thereto, the system of submitting designs anonymously eliminates all possible chance of pull and intrigue." We rather agree in this controversy with the correspondent. We all know of many successful practitioners who were first brought to public notice by their success in competitions won as young and somewhat untrained men at the early stages of their career, when they would have found it almost impossible to secure proper recognition in important works in direct competition with men who had been practicing for a number of years. Most of these men have made good in after life, and if all competitions had to be conducted under the name of the competitor, we feel quite sure that a large

number of men who lack the social standing which is so often necessary to secure large commissions would all their lives devote their abilities and energies to small and unimportant work.

WE doubt if any architect ever lived who had as many places of amusement to his credit as the late John Bailey McElfatrick, who died suddenly during the last month, at the age of seventy-seven. Mr. McElfatrick was in active business with his son, who succeeds him. He had erected sixteen of Manhattan's theatres and nine in Brooklyn, and, in fact, there is hardly a city in the Union which does not show the result of Mr. McElfatrick's work. As a designer his architectural brethren found much to criticize in his work, but many important improvements in theatre planning were distinctly due to his ingenuity, and no man in the United States knew the subject as well as he.

NOW that the expert opinion in relation to the San Francisco disaster is being collated, all authorities seem to agree that there is the most conclusive proof that bad workmanship more than any other cause contributed to the almost total destruction of the unfortunate city. Dr. Nakamura, professor of architecture in the Imperial University of Tokio, who was one of a committee dispatched by the Japanese Government to investigate the effects of the disaster, is reported to have said that "the dishonest mortar and faulty construction were more responsible for the demolition of San Francisco than any other cause." Investigation seems to prove that many small buildings of superior construction stood the shock as well as could be expected and even resisted the fire to a considerable extent.



Architects of To-Day.

MR. WALTER G. PETER, WASHINGTON.

IT is so rarely that the public is taken into the confidence of the designers of public works that it is interesting to view the large number of samples of granite submitted for the Grand Central Station which have been erected near Van Cortlandt Park. It is somewhat in the nature of a permanent granite exhibit, as some fifteen quarries have erected dressed and moulded piers, with caps and bases, each some five feet wide by eight feet high, from which a very comprehensive idea can be obtained of the texture and value of the competing materials.

BEFORE the introduction of the process print it was the ambition of every architect to have a complete file of the etchings of Giambattista Piranesi. During the past month a most comprehensive exhibition of the works of this master was held at Keppels galleries in Thirty-ninth Street. Piranesi was born in Venice in 1720 and died in Rome in 1778, and although he left a number of architectural works to his credit, he is remembered primarily by his series of large etchings of architectural subjects, mostly of the period of the Renaissance. The exhibition was also accompanied by a delightful little brochure prepared by Mr. Russell Sturgis, which carefully reviews all the plates shown and occasionally criticises the artist's perspective. Mr. Sturgis states "as regards the architecture itself and the interest which the student may and ought to take in Piranesi's architectural studies, it must never be forgotten that he gave us the aspect of many a fine old building in its much more perfect condition before the havoc wrought by one more century of popes and princes or of ignorant peasants, and also before the clearing out and cleaning up of the present archæological period." Most architects of to-day find these prints purely of historical interest rather than of æsthetic beauty, mainly on account of the intense blacks and whites which this etcher so frequently affected, and also by reason of his sordid foregrounds, which have anything but a pleasant effect.

BOSTON has a Society of Arts and Crafts. The Society is some ten years old, and officered and managed mainly by the architects of that city. Their work has had a very positive effect upon local manufactures, but the statement made by the jury of the Society in their annual report is decidedly discouraging, considering the condition of this movement in other parts of the world. The jury states that, with some notable exceptions, the design of the objects sent for their approval showed decided lack of "knowledge and study." "The designs, with few exceptions, showed ignorance of the simplest and most ordinary expression of materials. The designer usually finds himself spending hours fumbling over portions of his work over which he has no sense of the relative proportions, or being balked by miniature obstacles which were overcome centuries ago and wasting his energies by threshing them out *de novo*. It is *l'art nouveau*, indeed, the work of untrained, undeveloped brain and faltering hand." It is just in this particular that the old world, and particularly Germany, shows its decided advance over the arts and crafts work being done in this country. In the United States such work is too often an amateur pursuit, while in Germany, at least, the smallest things, even children's toys, are not too trivial to attract the attention of the scholarly and educated designer.

PEACE PALACE DESIGNS.

IN this issue of ARCHITECTURE we present two sets of drawings designed for the Peace Palace at the Hague. The only Americans who were recognized were Howard Greenley and H. S. Olin, of New York, who were awarded fifth prize. This, the most

quiet and unpretentious of the six premiated designs, is in regard to architectural expression the most refined and most suitable. Their perspective shows a good classic building, reposeful and strong. We regret the absence of the main floor plan of which no photograph was secured.

In striking contrast to the style of the first set are the most original and unique designs by Bourgeois and Blumenstein, also of New York. These two men were united in a central thought of what a Peace Palace ought to be, and in their work were guided by a philosophy which sought expression in the designs as shown.

They considered that for the holy purpose for which this building should be a home, it was impossible to design a building that would have awakened the recollections of the warlike past in history, anything that looked like a citadel or castle, anything of the gloom and cold of the Greek temple which expressed fear before the gods.

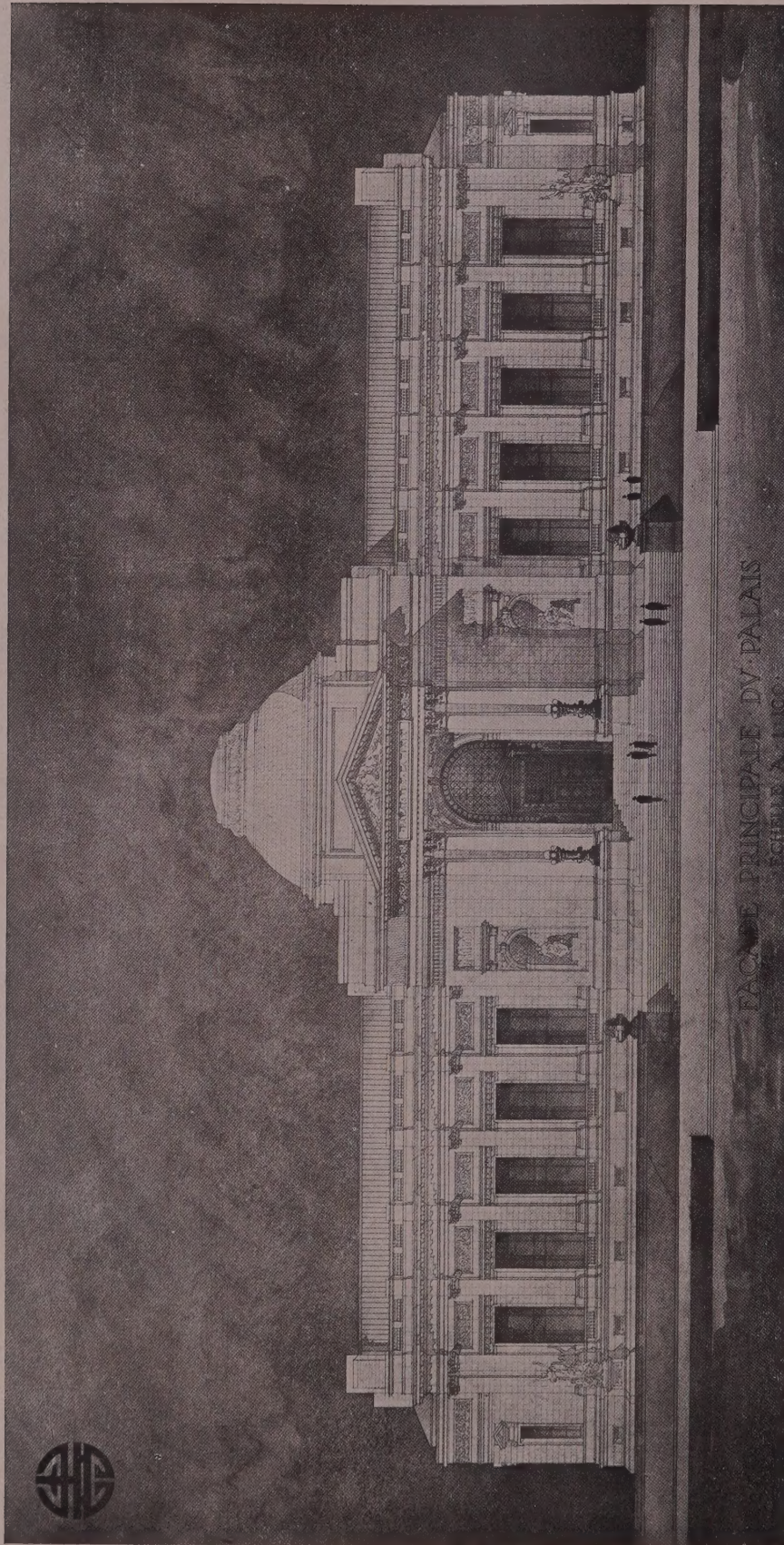
On a flat ground in the middle of a grove the Temple rises on a floor plan of an eight-pointed star. The library has the form of a maltese cross, and is connected with the Temple by a covered passage. It happens that the floor plan has the form of a decoration hanging on a maltese cross. The cross is known as the symbol of experience—education, and "Peace" is symbolized by the eight-pointed star within a circle, depended from the cross.

The aspiration of Peace is produced through Education. The center of the Circle represents the Highest from which light radiates. The circle represents the harmony of peoples in equal distance from the spring of light. The eight points of the octagon are dedicated to the eight nations who have signed for peace arbitration. Against the three front sides of the octagon, three pyramids are leaning, through which entrances are the three philosophical paths (Power, Matter, Spirit), which meet in the center. The small entrances signify that each person must seek peace alone. From this central point alone one can see the sublimity of the interior arrangement (as the section is like a pyramid standing on its point), gallery upon gallery and the whole finishing in an immense dome.

To the right and left two flights of stairs lead to the two court-rooms, which are raised from the entrance floor. The second floor is another octagon inscribed into the lower one, showing the rotation of the Universe and its sense of manifestation in man. Through a long corridor is reached the center of the cross, the distribution room of the library. Around it the reading rooms are grouped.

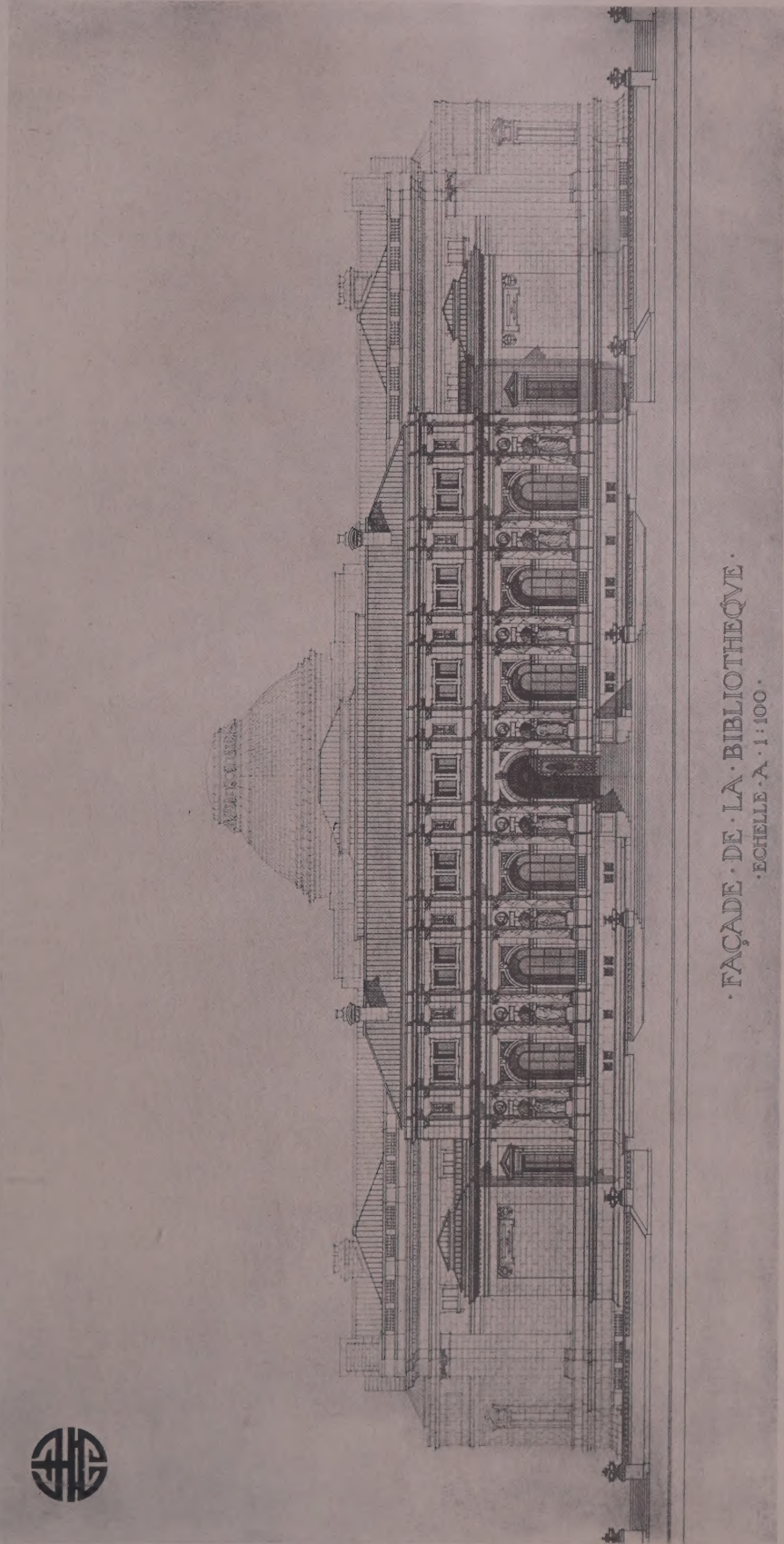
The exterior was intended to be built in granite, with bronze applique. The columns at the points of the octagon are dedicated to the powers or centers of activity, and show the palm in its unfolding. The crowns of the palms are decorated with four pigeons and on their wings rests the planet. Each state is indicated through its ring of enlightenment, and a Genius in a higher sphere throws his rays upon each country. The garden forms the continuation of rays coming from the holy center, distributing Peace over the whole planet. The complete key to this interesting design convinces us that endless thought and study are responsible for its being.

WE may in time outgrow all forms of mimetic art and cultivate pure decorative art in abstract color and form. But in the meantime, is it not somewhat presumptuous in us to assume that our statuary and painting will be admired for thousands of years to come, as we do when we use bronze and marble, mosaic and plaster as the materials?



FRONT FACADE, PEACE PALACE AND LIBRARY, COURT OF ARBITRATION, THE HAGUE.

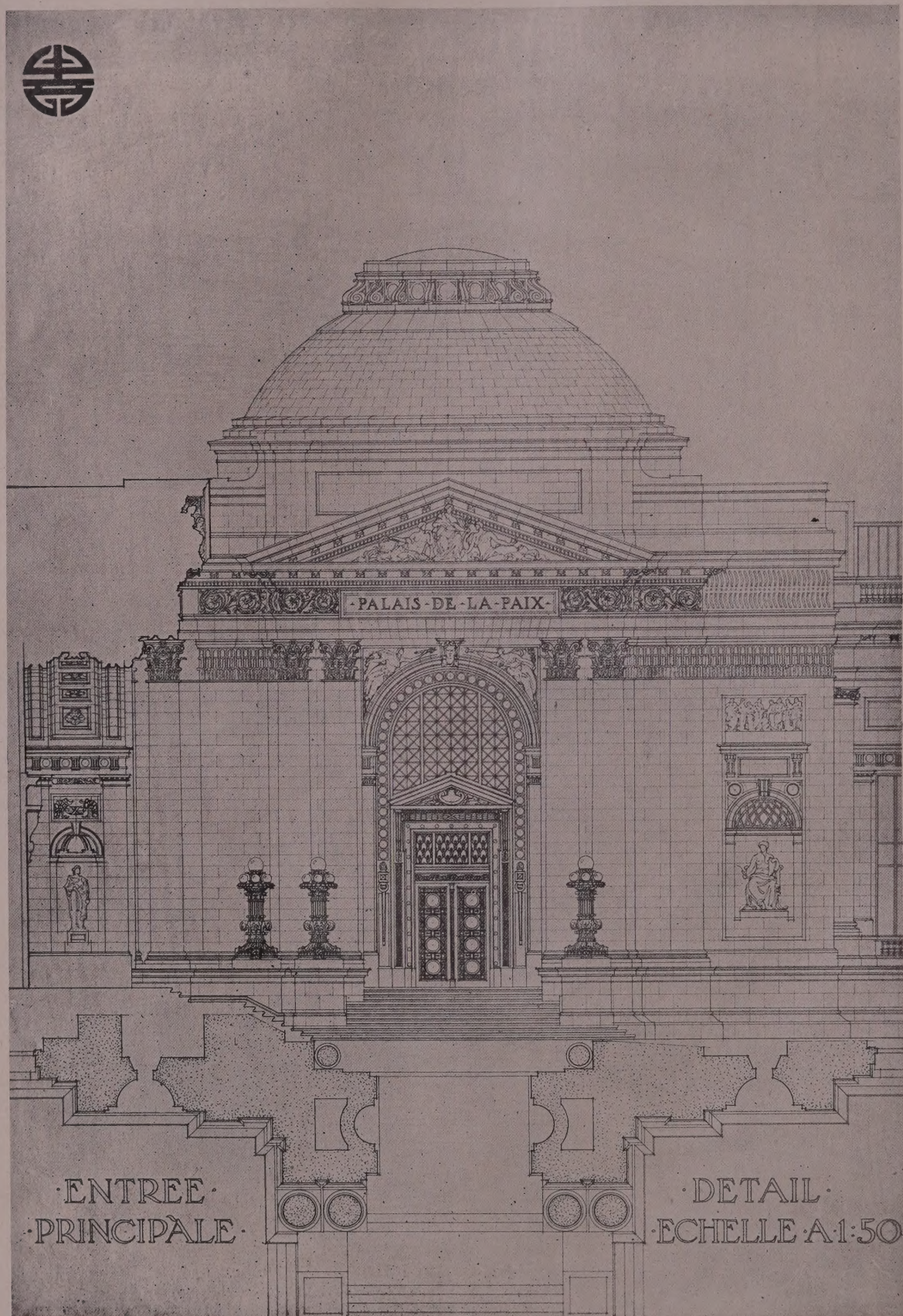
Fifth Prize. Howard Greenley and H. S. Olin, Architects.



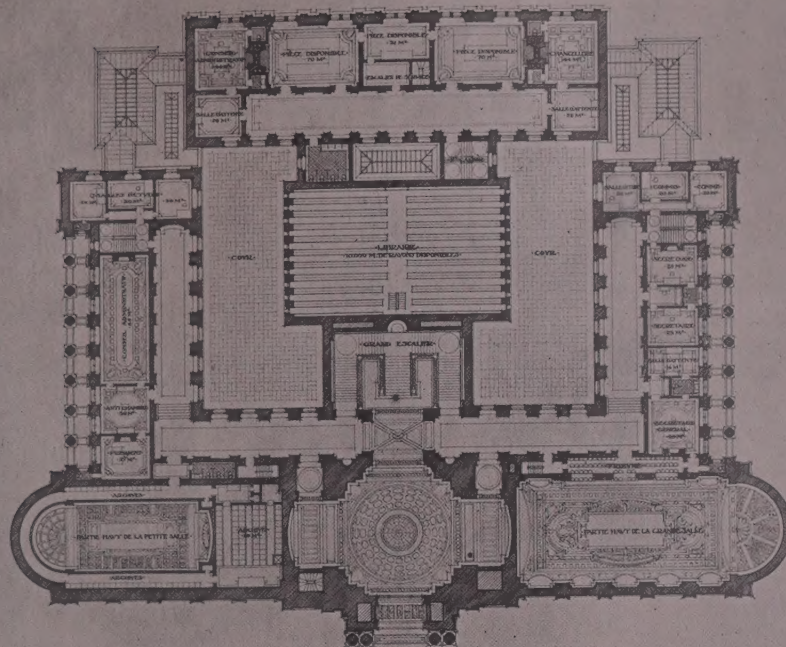
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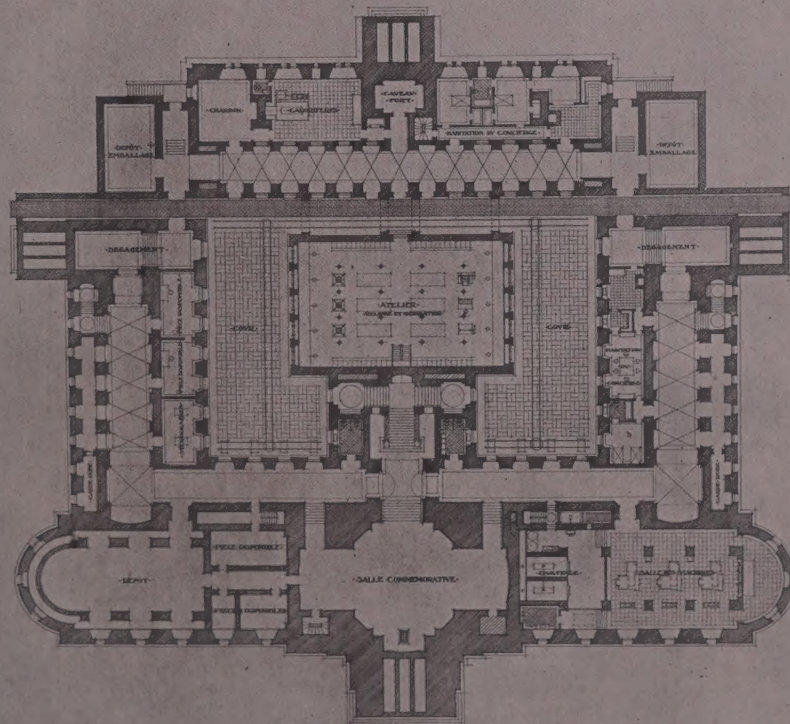
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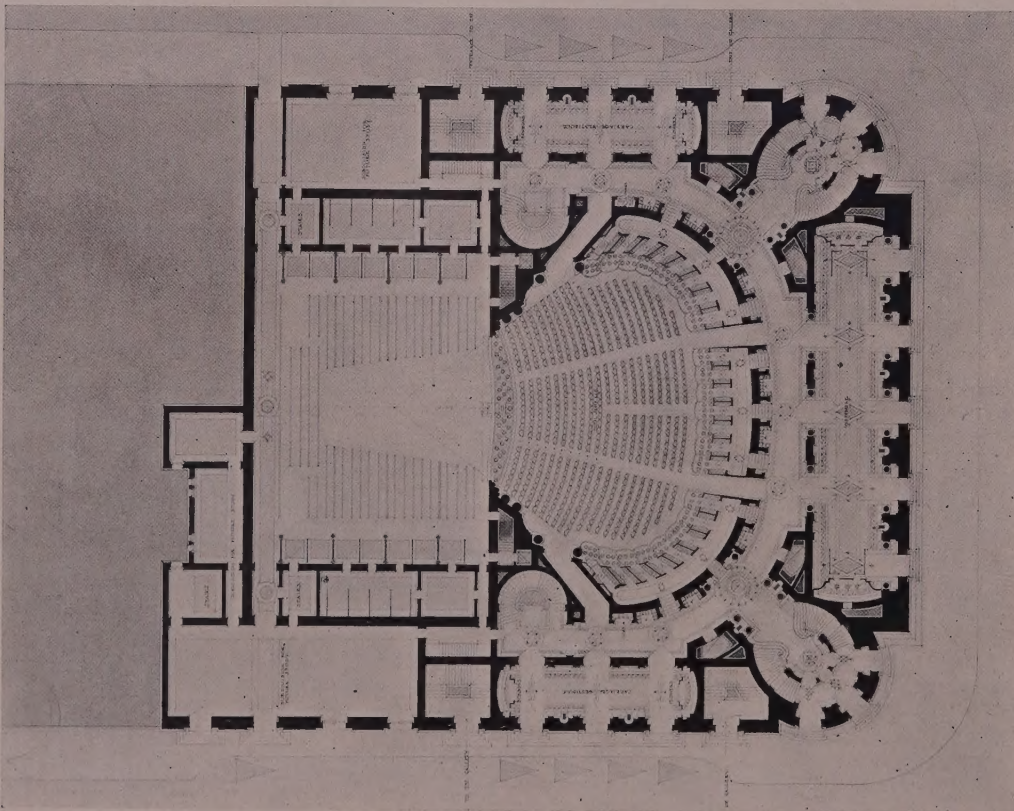
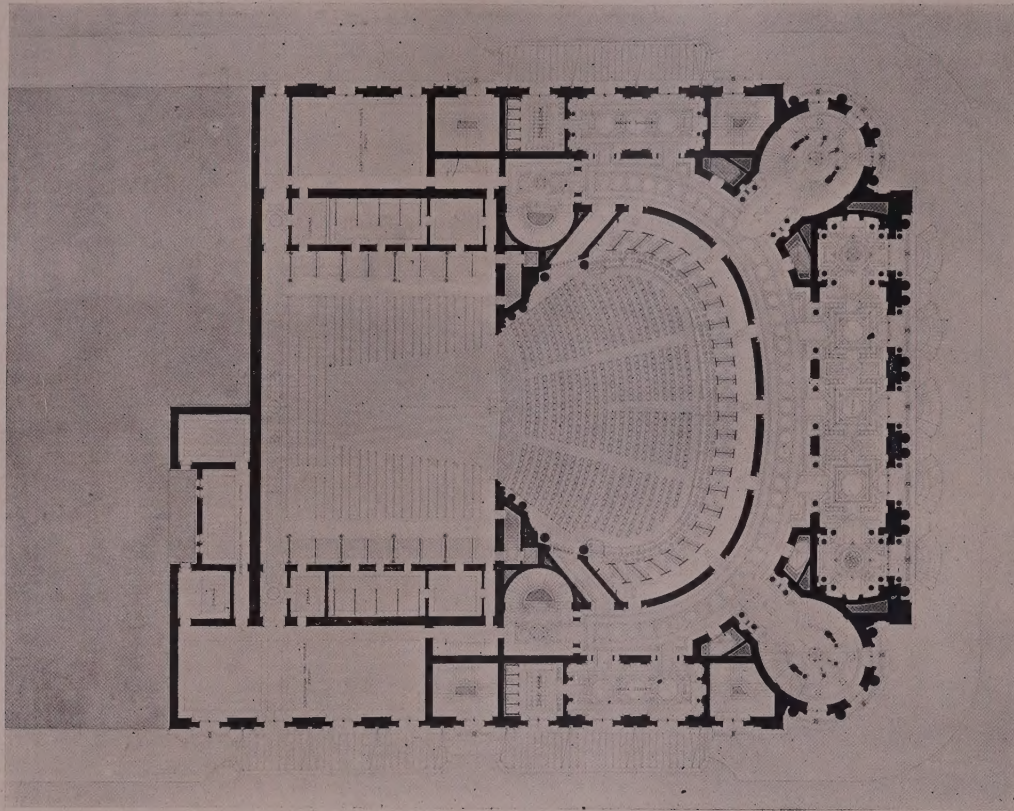
DETAIL, MIDDLE PORTION, FRONT FACADE, PEACE PALACE AND LIBRARY, COURT OF ARBITRATION, THE HAGUE.
Fifth Prize. Howard Greenley and H. S. Olin, Architects.



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PLANS, ACCEPTED COMPETITIVE DESIGN, THE NEW THEATRE, CENTRAL PARK WEST, 62D AND 63D STS., NEW YORK.

Carrere & Hastings, Architects.

The effect of the fall of Constantinople and the consequent dissemination of arts and letters upon a field so fertile as Italy in the fifteenth century, can be compared to the effect which Egyptian and Eastern Art had previously had upon the Greeks. It was the result to be expected; prince and subject, noble and citizen took up the pursuit of knowledge with eagerness, and minds starved by the barrenness of mediæval learning in Europe were full-fed; for then at length from this sowing came flower and fruit such as few nations have produced and the reign of intellect gradually succeeded to the rule of absolute physical force, not but what there was still blood-letting enough to gratify even the mediæval mind, but hand in hand with the wars and petty broils went learning, art and the æsthetic enjoyment which these brought, so that in his leisure at least, the prince, duke, or other tyrant, heaped favors on his court architect or painter, and bettered the daily life of his subjects. The Italians became great worshippers of the antique in all forms, and the libraries and treasure houses of the orient were emptied by their enthusiastic researches and unremitting zeal.

If one can visit, or study from books, prints, and photographs, such examples as are in the Vatican, and the best of the Roman Florentine, Venetian, and other palaces and also the villas in and about the principal Italian cities, all that has been said is more forcibly presented, than can be conveyed by description or print.

It may be safely said that there is nothing to take the place of personal observation. Its value to a designer is great, and although the usefulness of prints and photographs is not to be disputed, yet no one can feel well trained either for the practical application of his knowledge or for mere enjoyment, who has not enjoyed the advantage both of personal observation and of sketches from the real object itself, while architectural students should go farther and use the lead strip and tape line. It is moreover of great value to those who are studying the use of ornament on buildings to see the ornament full size on the building itself just as it is of value to the architect to see how certain sizes of mouldings appear in certain places on actual structures. The drawing alone is not enough; we must see the effect



Carved Panel in Choir, S. Agostino Perugia.
Palace Uguccioni, Florence.

of contrasts between plain and ornamental surfaces, of light and shade, and of stated distance from the average spectator's eye. All these are problems, which personal inspection alone can solve.

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